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Pentagon Reports Testing Of Sub Missile in Russia

By ORR KELLY
Star Staff Writer

1 The Soviet Union has con-
ducted an intensive series of
tests of a new submarine-
launched missile from a sub-
merged launching site in the
White Sea off Archangel, Pen-
tagon sources said today.

2 Defense Secretary Melvin R.
Laird said in a press confer-
ence Thursday there had been
eight tests of the sub-launched
missile and eight tests of in-
tercontinental ballistic mis-
siles since the strategic arms
treaty agreements had
been signed in Moscow on
May 26.

3 Laird's comment was one of
the rare occasions on which
American officials have talked
openly of so-called "internal"
tests in the Soviet Union. The
U.S. practice generally, in the
past, has been to provide de-
tails only on tests in which
the missiles landed in the
ocean outside the Soviet
Union.

Submerged Test Bed

4 The tests referred to by
Laird all were conducted over
a distance of about 3,500
miles, with the dummy war-
heads impacting on the Kam-
chatka Peninsula north of
Japan, according to Pentagon
sources.

5 Earlier tests of the SS-N-3
Sawfly submarine-launched
missile were conducted from
a land launching site. But Pen-

tagon sources said the test
flights were now being
launched from a submerged
test bed—not an operational
submarine off Archangel.

6 Of the eight missiles tested,
informed sources said, several
were fired in a flurry in early
June.

7 The tests indicate that the
Soviet Union is moving closer
to the time it hopes to deploy
its Yankee II missile subma-
rine which will carry 12 of the
big Sawfly missiles rather
than the 16 shorter-range mis-
siles carried by the earlier
Yankee class submarines. The
earlier Yankees are similar
to the American Polaris.

8 The eight ICBM tests re-
ferred to by Laird involved
one test of a big SS-9 missile
on May 26 plus tests of both
the SS-11 and SS-13 missiles.
The liquid-fueled SS-11 and
the solid-fueled SS-13 are both
classified as "light" missiles
and are roughly the size of the
American Minuteman.

Vandenberg Equivalent

9 The ICBM's were launched
from the Plesetsk test station
—which has been described as
the Soviet version of the
American Vandenberg Air
Force Base, which is almost
exclusively a military opera-
tion. Those tests, too, impact-
ed in the Kamchatka target
area.

Plesetsk, one of the three

major Soviet launch sites, is
north of Moscow and a short
distance south of Archangel.

10 So far this year, the United
States has launched 20
ICBM's. Of those, 13 were
fired into the Pacific as tar-
gets in tests of the Safeguard
missile defense system. The
other seven were tests of the
missiles themselves or train-
ing shots for missile crews.

11 Since the May 26 ceremony
in Moscow, Pentagon sources
said, the United States has
fired only three or four mis-
siles.

12 In both countries, tests are
usually conducted in spurts.
Certain components will be
tested, then there will be a
pause for further work on the
system, and then a further
series of tests.

13 Tests by both countries are
permitted under the agree-
ments.